

Eastbourne Bridge Club Etiquette and Procedure

It is in the interests of all club members to follow appropriate etiquette and procedure at the bridge table. The EBU Best Behaviour at Bridge policy should already be familiar to you and applied at all times. This Etiquette sheet covers more detailed points to be followed by all members and is based on the EBU model and its laws.

Points of Law, Etiquette and Procedure

This sheet is prepared mainly for the benefit of new members and improvers. While most existing members will already be aware of the majority of these points it is hoped that it will serve as a useful reminder, and that more experienced players be tolerant of those who are still learning their way around the intricacies of duplicate bridge and to provide gentle help and guidance.

General Procedure and Time Keeping

These points help the Director ensure that play proceeds at a reasonable speed and reduce mechanical error, e.g. cards mixed up between hands.

- Please aim to arrive by 1.15 pm for 1.30 pm start and be seated as soon as possible, but no later than 1.20 pm. For other start times also arrive 15 minutes before and be seated 10 minutes before the start. This allows the director time to set up the movement, the boards and the Bridgemates.
- Dress code is smart casual (see note on shorts on noticeboard).
- Switch off mobile phones or place in "silent" mode.
- Always count your cards before looking at them. If you do not have 13 cards call the Director.
- Leave the board in play on the table, pointing in the right direction until the hand is finished. Helps prevent hands placed in wrong slots.
- When on lead, make your lead face down in case your partner wants to ask a question.
- Do not put bidding cards away until after the lead card has been faced. Only then write the contract on your scorecard or Bridge mate. If you are dummy, put your hand down before recording the contract.
- Try not to take too long over calls or when playing a card. Best practice is to always be deliberate and in tempo.
- Declarer should never touch dummy's cards, even to rearrange them. Avoids arguments as to whether a card has been played.

- At end of a board make sure all players are agreed on the result before North enters the result on the Bridgmate. (On commencement of the session all members should ensure they have their club membership numbers). East to verify the entry. If there is a mistake, North should rectify, or call the Director if necessary. East should allow other players to see the percentage score result.
- It is North's responsibility to ensure boards are passed on to the correct table (or relay as appropriate) at the end of each round.
- When playing a Howell movement both pairs should check the card at the beginning of each round to make sure they are playing at the correct table, against the correct pair and using the correct boards.

Bidding and Play

- All partnerships **should** have an identically completed convention card. All partnerships playing non-standards systems (other than Basic or Benji Acol) **must** have a full, identically completed convention card.
- Try not to touch the bidding box until you are sure what to call.
- Use the STOP card when making a jump bid, including opening bids, leaving the STOP card on the table for 10 seconds, before putting it away. This creates a pause for thought avoiding the inference that a player who passes quickly has nothing to think about.
- When alerting a call ensure both opponents see the ALERT card.
- Eastbourne Bridge Club follows the EBU alerting rules. (See website).
- During the bidding you can only ask an opponent for an explanation of a bid made by their side when it is YOUR turn to call. You can only ask the partner of the player who made the bid.
- As Declarer or Dummy, if your partner has failed to alert a bid, alerts a bid that was not alertable, or fails to give a proper explanation per the convention card, it is your obligation to inform your opponents AFTER the auction ends and before the opening lead is faced. Defenders can call the Director at that time if they feel they have been damaged.
- As a Defender if you make either of the above mistakes you must inform the opponents AFTER the play is completed and call the Director.
- The opening lead must be made face down. At that point the leader's partner has the opportunity to ask questions about the opponent's bidding. If there are none, the partner should say "No questions". Once the opening lead is made it cannot be changed. For this reason all four players should leave the bidding cards on the table until any questions have been asked and the opening lead faced.
- If there is any hesitation in the bidding or the play, the partner of the player who hesitated must be careful not to draw any inference from this and must bid/play as

he/she would have bid/played with no hesitation. This is particularly important if a player hesitates during the bidding and then passes.

- When you make an insufficient bid, it is not your right to correct it, the Director must be called and he will explain the options to the left hand opponent and offender.
- If Declarer plays a card from the incorrect hand, either defender or Dummy may point this out.
- A lead from the wrong hand can be accepted by either defender.
- Only play your cards when it is your turn.
- To prevent a possible revoke, when a Defender fails to follow suit, Defender's partner may immediately inquire "No spades, partner"; for example. Similarly, to prevent Declarer from an irregularity, Dummy may inquire when Declarer fails to follow suit.
- As Dummy you may NOT call the Director. All Dummy can do is alert Declarer to prevent an irregularity. Only touch the cards the Declarer has called. If declarer designates a suit but not the rank, he is deemed to have called the lowest card and if he designates a rank but not the suit he is deemed to be continuing the suit in which dummy won the trick.
- Please shuffle the cards after the hand before returning them to the board, thank your opponents at the end of the round, and move promptly to your next table.

Calling the Director

- Do call the Director at any time if there is a problem during the bidding or the play. He or she is there to help you when things go wrong, so don't try to sort out things yourselves. Agree the necessity or explain the reason for calling the Director to your opponents.
- Please call the Director immediately if there is a problem with the board or you spot an error in the Bridgmate score for that board.
- Remember the Director's responsibilities include handling all law and rule infractions as well as running a smooth and pleasant game.
- The Director is your friend but that does not mean he or she will always rule in your favour. If you do not like the ruling or think it unfair tell the Director politely that you'd like to discuss it after the session has ended.

Above all, enjoy the game.